

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

August 23, 2012

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Winning \$750.00!

The first Safety Jackpot cash drawing happened at the Boonville maintenance building during the crew's morning muster safety meeting. Crew Leader Keith Zey was the first MoDOT employee to win a chance at the big grab bag drawing that is part of the new safety incentive program. Keith did an excellent job on this first draw by choosing bags that totaled \$750.00, and he will receive a check for that amount.

The grab was a lot of fun, but everyone is asked to remember what it's really all about - safety. The incentive program is just one piece of the new Safety Culture and our zero injury philosophy.

Each month one lucky employee, who submitted their Safety Jackpot cards the previous month, will be randomly selected to try their hand at the grab bag. The monthly cash prizes range from \$500.00 to \$10,000.

Who will be next?



Visit <http://youtu.be/oCNMNa9UxSs> or click above to watch the video of Keith's grab bag experience.

New Tangible Result Reshapes Tracker Measures

by Holly Dentner



Over the last few months, MoDOT has been working to update its performance management tool, Tracker, to ensure that the measures accurately drive our performance and help supervisors and senior management make the best decisions for the department.

Tracker is divided into chapters that are based on MoDOT's Tangible Results – things like uninterrupted traffic flow, fast projects of great value, and efficient movement of goods, to name a few. The Tangible Results are all things that MoDOT's customers can see as the department fulfills its mission.

With the July 2012 edition of Tracker, we've made some significant changes, including the creation of a

new tangible result: "Great Workplace, Great Employees." This new tangible result will help us focus on delivering outstanding customer service through an engaged, valued, and diverse workforce that is reflective of MoDOT customers.

"Great Workplace, Great Employees" also means that MoDOT will continue to focus on providing opportunities to contractors and vendors that reflect the customers, communities, and cultures we serve.

A recent statewide survey showed that Missourians are satisfied with the job MoDOT is doing. That is a direct result of the hard work of MoDOT's outstanding workforce. "Great Workplace, Great Employees" will help us maintain that satisfaction level in the future.

Overall, Tracker went from 118 measures to 105. While we added 19 new measures, 19 measures were either removed, combined into other measures, or shifted to D-Tracker. All customer satisfaction measures were consolidated under "Outstanding Customer Service," so we could easily correlate the feedback from our customers.

Check out the new measures and read more about "Great Workplace, Great Employees" in the [July 2012 Tracker](http://www.modot.org/about/Tracker.htm) (<http://www.modot.org/about/Tracker.htm>).

AWOS Project Improves Air Traffic Safety in Western Missouri

by DeAnne Rickabaugh



The new AWOS System becomes active in Mosby, MO.
Photo by Dave Burle, Aviation Project Manager.

A new Automated Surface Weather Observation System – more commonly known as an AWOS – was activated on August 7 at the Midwest National Air Center in Mosby, MO.

An AWOS is a highly sophisticated data sensing, processing and dissemination system that provides accurate and up-to-date weather information essential to the safe and economic operation of an airport. The stations collect weather data that pilots use to make flight decisions. The data includes:

- Air temperature
- Dew point
- Barometric pressure
- Wind speed
- Peak wind gusts, wind direction and variability
- Visibility and visibility variation
- Thunderstorm and precipitation identification
- Cloud layer information and density

MoDOT's Multimodal Operations team administered the federal grant that made this project possible.

The Mosby airport will maintain this station, however MoDOT owns and maintains 12 AWOS stations statewide. You can find a list of MoDOT stations and reports of

current weather data at www.modot.org/othertransportation/aviation/AWOS/AWOSMain.shtml

All other weather stations in Missouri and the nation are available on the Federal Aviation Administration's site, www.faa.gov/air_traffic/weather/asos.

What's Happening

Move Over Law Takes Effect Next Week

Beginning Tuesday, August 28, Missourians will notice new signs reminding motorists to slow down or change lanes when approaching emergency or maintenance vehicles parked on the shoulder. The top of the sign will feature black letters on a yellow background, drawing attention to the message and aligning Missouri's sign design with those of other states.

The new law also includes certain MoDOT vehicles in the legal definition of emergency vehicles. Now, when responding to an emergency, MoDOT Motorist Assist or Emergency Response vehicle operators can display red lights and use a siren. They will do so only to alert motorists stopped in an emergency traffic queue to yield the right-of-way.



"Get to Know MoDOT" Meetings Slated for Disadvantaged Businesses

MoDOT will host two regional meetings in the coming weeks to help disadvantage businesses and MoDOT staff get to know each other better. The after-hour mixers in St. Louis and Kansas City will give both groups a chance to put faces with names, gather insights on how to be a successful contractor and generally build stronger relationships. All interested women and minority owned businesses are encouraged to attend. Plans are already in place to expand the mixers to more cities in 2013. For more information click on the following links:

[Kansas City DBE Mixer](#)
[St. Louis DBE Mixer](#)

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over



The new substance-impaired driving message is clear and simple: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.

Approximately 240 Missouri state and local law enforcement agencies will participate in the national effort to deter substance-impaired driving by conducting statewide sobriety checkpoints and DWI saturation patrols August 17 through Sept. 3.

The strong enforcement presence reinforces the importance of driving sober and the legal consequences of ignoring that advice. Missourians will hear and see the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over message during a television, radio, digital and print public awareness campaign.

Statewide, law enforcement made 852 DWI arrests during the impaired driving campaign in August and September of 2011. In 2011, 216 people were killed, 865

seriously injured in accidents that involved at least one impaired driver.

To learn more about impaired driving and how you can Arrive Alive, visit saveMOLives.com.

Recent Retirements

Jerry Wessel - NW - 28
Sheila Scheib - NW - 23
Jafar Dehghani - NW - 21
Eldon Jones - NE - 20
Charles Kitchen - NE - 28
Vernon Leonard - NE - 33

Gerald Hanlin - NE - 12
Earnest Smith - KC - 28
Richard Cotriss - CD - 22
Eve Black - SL - 18
John Owens - SL - 23
Kimbel Dye - SW - 16

Ricky Branum - SE - 26
Thomas Smotherman - SE - 23
Stuart Denich - CO - 28
Carolyn Brockes - CO - 38
Virginia Brown - CO - 23

In Memorium

Billie Asher
former D1 - July 12
Jean Foster
former D8 - July 14
Robert Wideman
former D6 - July 15

Ferrelle Ryan
former D7 - July 20
Calvin Shivers
former D5 - July 26
Cecil Ousley
CO - July 27

William Moreland
CO - July 29
Raymond Anderson
former D1 - July 29
Lloyd Niswonger
former D10 - July 29

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Celebrating an Achievement

in Maintenance Environmental Responsibility

by Gayle Unruh

MoDOT has achieved an environmental responsibility milestone in maintenance. What started as environmental compliance inspections of 333 maintenance lots in 2005 and 2006 became 2,134 district projects to correct noted deficiencies.

The major projects involved building truck washing facilities and connecting to city sewer systems to control waste water, building or repairing salt storage, building secondary containment for roadway snow and ice treatment (brine) storage, installing security measures to limit accidental or intentional releases of petroleum to adjacent properties, controlling maintenance lot storm water runoff, and training maintenance workers in the proper techniques to control petroleum spills. All projects, totaling \$4.85 million, are reported by the districts as completed in the July 2012 MoDOT Tracker. These accomplishments will save MoDOT expenditures on spilled products and potentially costly clean ups, keep MoDOT in regulatory compliance, and most importantly, make us better neighbors.



Maintenance personnel respond to a simulated spill event at their facility.

MoDOT congratulates those from the central office environmental staff who inspected the maintenance lots and patiently explained, trained, and worked with the districts to reach compliance as well as those from the district and central office maintenance, risk management and general services staff who planned, budgeted, designed, built, and tracked the projects. All played a role in making MoDOT a more environmentally responsible organization.

If you have questions about maintenance environmental compliance, please contact Kevin Wideman at 573-526-4171 for the NW and SL districts, Bill Wilder at 573-526-2904 for the NE and SW districts, Stan Thessen at 573-526-3599 for the KC and C districts, or Stowe Johnson at 573-522-5562 for the SE district.

Celebrating "Then and Wow" at the Fair

by Holly Dentner

Thousands of fairgoers visited MoDOT during the 2012 Missouri State Fair, which ran Aug. 9-19 in Sedalia, Mo. The fair's theme, "Celebrate Then and Wow," highlighted the 110th anniversary of Missouri's extensive agricultural showcase.

While the fair itself is 110 years old, MoDOT has been a part of the fair since 1922, and has been situated in its current location on the fairgrounds since 1929. The Transportation Expo Center and beautiful highway gardens were once again home to all sorts of facts, figures, and fun related to Missouri's transportation system.

The biggest display in the MoDOT building alerted fairgoers to the recent change in the "Slow Down or Move Over" law, which now includes MoDOT trucks with law enforcement and emergency response vehicles parked on the side of the road.

The Adopt-A-Highway booth was another popular area, with about 250 people and groups signing up to help keep Missouri's highways clean and litter-free. A chance at free Amtrak tickets also meant lots of visitors to the multimodal tables.

Outside in the gardens, many fairgoers grabbed snapshots of themselves with Barrel Bob, who took a break from his spokes barrel duties to help spread the work zone safety message at the fair.

The newest feature in the highway gardens was the creation of a pollinator garden designed to attract bees and other pollinating insects. The garden was a partnership between MoDOT and the St. Louis Zoo, and features beautiful flowering plants that will encourage the growth of pollinators in Missouri.



MoDOT volunteers stayed busy during the fair, handing out the ever-popular highway maps. Many visitors also received a reusable grocery bag made of recycled plastic as part of the Adopt-A-Highway program's 25 anniversary.

Photos by Cathy Morrison.



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Northwest District

Move Over? Thank You!



Earlier this year, the Missouri State Legislature and Governor Jay Nixon worked together to pass a bill protecting employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation. A few of the Northwest District employees wanted them to know what passing this legislation meant to them. Intermediate Community Relations Specialist Travis Ellis put together this tribute. To view this video, please click on the above photo or visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8ty_AIV8YM&feature=plcp

Video shot and edited by Travis Ellis

Northwest at the State Fair

Thursday, Aug. 9, was a hot day at the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia, but the nine volunteers from the Northwest District didn't seem to mind. Like many other districts, our volunteers get up long before dawn to make the drive to the Highway Gardens, but it's worth it to get a chance to meet the people we serve in a more casual setting. Pictured driving the truck is Transportation Project Designer Russ O'Daniell. Behind him are (l-r) Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Joseph Turner, Senior Facility Operations Crew Worker Loyde Anderson, Senior Maintenance Worker at Hamilton Joe Gibson, Senior Maintenance Worker at Hamilton Mike Cline, Maintenance Crew Leader at Lathrop Walt West and Maintenance Supervisor at Princeton Mark Silkwood. (The lady in the background is Marilyn Silkwood, Mark's wife.)

Photo by Marcia Johnson



State Fair Bragging Rights



The same day our volunteers were at the Highway Gardens (Aug. 9), our very own Jeff Pittman, maintenance supervisor at Savannah and an employee for over 23 years, faced a panel of three judges when he competed in the State Fair auctioneering contest. The contestants were asked to auction two items: A Farmall B die cast tractor and a DeWalt bit set. The judges took into account several areas including: introduction, initial command, overall appearance, poise, voice control, rhythm, speed, clarity, voice expression, article description, eye contact/scans audience, body language and auctioneer accuracy. Pittman placed third out of 15 contestants, and, best of all, his entire family was there to cheer him on!

He is the owner and operator of Pittman Auction Service based in Rosendale, Mo. A native of Northwest Missouri, he caught the bug for auctioneering after

years of attending local auctions and hearing the chant of the auctioneer. In 1996, he attended the Missouri Auction School and has been an active licensed auctioneer ever since. A member of the MPAA and NAA, Pittman joined forces with his father, mother, wife and two sons to make Pittman Auction Service a family-based business. They specialize in real estate, firearms, personal property, bankruptcies, charitable events and various other types of auctions.



Photos by friends and family of Jeff Pittman

Record Breaking Safe & Sound

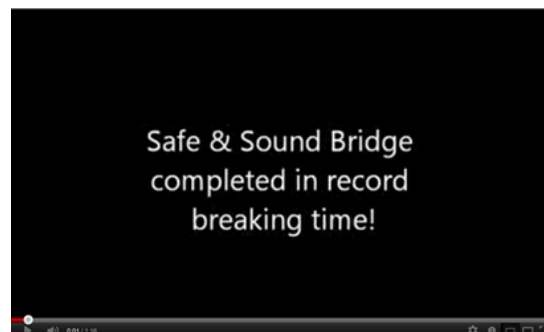
Story by Holly L. Hailey



The Northwest District opened the bridge over Niagara Creek on U.S. Hwy 169 in Andrew County on Saturday, Aug. 11th. That's not unusual, with 190 bridges in our portion of the program, we are always opening or closing a bridge. What makes this one different is the fact that it was completed in only 19 days, which makes it the fastest built single span concrete deck bridge built in the state under Safe & Sound. According to Northwest Regional Field Engineer Troy Slagle,

"This section of U.S. Hwy 169 carries over 3,200 cars a day, so we are pleased to see this bridge completed in record time. We thank Phillips Grading, the contractor on this project, and their workers who are credited with this construction

record." One hundred eighty-seven Safe & Sound bridges are now completed, with three remaining in our district. Click on the image below or check the video link (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf6oD4_LDH0&feature=youtu) to hear an interview with Troy Slagle about the project.



Photos provided by Holly L. Hailey
Video shot and edited by Travis Ellis

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Northeast District

Storing and Labeling Important for Potential Chemical Hazards

Did you know combining mineral spirits, linseed oil and a certain type of towel could cause combustion? Under the right conditions it can. Our environment is full of potential hazards many of us may have never heard of, which is why our Risk Management team works with supervisors to ensure we are handling chemicals and labelling potential hazards during our annual environmental inspections.

"We have items, such as flares, chemicals, and others that are not used in a timely manner or may not be stored correctly," said Safety and Health Manager Shari Dye. "These could be a danger to our employees and our neighbors," she added. Flares are a good example. If not stored properly they have the potential to light up and damage our facilities. A lot of times our employees don't know that putting cans of materials next to each other may not be compatible and if one leaked it could cause a problem. "We stay updated on the MSDS (material safety data sheets), which is the universal method for identifying chemicals, physical data, storage, disposal, PPE, etc., to help employees identify potential hazards," Shari said.

Part of the environmental inspection includes managing inventory. "Some items get outdated fairly quickly, so we need to keep that in mind when stocking items," she explained. Our environmental focus is not only on chemicals. Salt storage is another area where improvements have been made as a result of environmental inspections. Doors have been installed on salt bins to make them more secure and prevent leakage. Salt runoff can cause damage to our neighbors property, costing the department time and money to correct. Shari will make suggestions and work with the superintendent and supervisor to make corrections during the inspections. Environmental inspections are taking place over the next several weeks in the NE District.



Shari Dye, safety and health manager for the NE District, discusses the contents of this chemical with Elsberry Supervisor Roy Niemeyer during his building's annual environmental inspection.

Barrel Bob is Everywhere

by Marisa Ellison, Customer Relations Manager



Corey Bringer and Andy Dittmer from the Canton maintenance crew have been the "caretakers" of Barrel Bob this year, after building him this spring. Barrel Bob has made several appearances all over the district this year, and is now overseeing the work zone at a Hannibal intersection.

If you've driven around the state as many times as I have this year, you have seen him. Sometimes he has on a vest, or there's a miniature standing next to him. He's on a hill or in a field, but he's always near a highway work zone, and he's always on Facebook. To many, he's quite a character. He almost always gets attention from the media, and sometimes unwanted attention from pranksters who "decorate" or deface him. Yet, you instantly recognize him. He's become an icon in the MoDOT world over the past few years, and while you may not think of him directly as a "colleague," his size commands respect.

This year alone, my family and I have seen Barrel Bob in the areas of the Lake of the Ozarks, St. Joseph, Kansas City, and, of course, Hannibal. We enjoy identifying the differences in each character, and I'm hopeful other families see him as an opportunity to educate each other about the importance of slowing down in a work zone. After all, that's part of Barrel Bob's mission!

Customer Appreciates AAH, Crews

I just wanted to take the time to write you a short letter. I wanted you and everyone concerned to know how pleased we are with our Adopt-a-Highway sign. It looks so nice and the people who put it up could not of done a better job!

I know with road closings and bridge closings sometimes people do not send good feedback! But please let everyone know I think the Palmyra group is awesome at keeping everything cleaned, mowed, dead animals picked up and always a smile on their face even while it is hot and they are stopping traffic! Kudo's to them all!

They also took the time to send a truck and trailer to our recent parade which makes it extra special. They handed out maps, litter bags, candy , which everyone was so pleased. Thanks again and please pass the letter around and let them know they do make a difference at making our roads safe and clean! Thanks again!
Bless you and yours,
Liz and Mike Donath, Philadelphia, MO



The Palmyra maintenance facility received a lot of praise from a customer who also participates in the Adopt A Highway program.

For more info

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Kansas Secretary of Transportation Visits MoDOT

Mike King, KDOT's new leader, stops by Scout

by Gina Myles

Kansas Secretary of Transportation Mike King and Assistant Secretary Jerry Younger visited Kansas City Scout's Traffic Management Center (TMC) Tuesday, Aug. 21. Scout is the only bi-state traffic management venture in the country which was designed, built and is jointly operated by both the Kansas and Missouri Departments of Transportation. Secretary King has held his position since being appointed by Kansas Governor Sam Brownback in April 2012, and he visited Scout to gain knowledge about the different aspects of Scout's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) program. He expressed interests in the MoDOT/KDOT budget split, fiber and radio connectivity of the Scout system, needs for future expansion of the system, and the overall benefits of ITS to the Kansas City Region.

Before joining KDOT, King had more than 30 years of private sector experience in transportation and energy construction. He was the third generation of his family to work in the construction industry and was president and majority owner of King Enterprise Group in McPherson, Kan., a company that grew from a small concrete contractor to a premier central Kansas contractor in the oil/gas and industrial marketplace.

Kansas City District Engineer Dan Niec and Assistant District Engineer Chris Redline accompanied Secretary King on his tour of the TMC, which the Secretary referred to as the "NASA Room" bringing a laugh to all MoDOT and Scout staff who hosted him during his visit.

King is committed to successfully completing T-WORKS, Kansas' comprehensive transportation program, with a focus on providing safety enhancements, improving commute times and making the kind of infrastructure improvements that will help spur economic growth and create jobs.



Dan Niec, Kansas City District Engineer, Mike King, Kansas Secretary of Transportation and Chris Redline listen as Scout's fiber optics network capacity is explained. Photo by Gina Myles

Kansas City Tests Mobile Barrier Trailer

by Steve Porter

Trying to do your job in a work zone with cars, trucks and semis passing by at 70+ miles per hour is unnerving as well as dangerous.

But MoDOT is trying out a new piece of equipment that will give workers more peace of mind and may well save lives.

The Mobile Barrier trailer, a 100-foot-long tractor-trailer rig that includes a TMA, a solar-powered CMS, a gas-powered electrical generator and an air compressor for pneumatic equipment, was delivered Wednesday at the Stadium Maintenance Facility. MoDOT is getting a good look at it through a three-month lease with an option to purchase. It's inventor, Kevin Groeneweg, of Golden, Colo., and trainer Walt Black of Groeneweg's company, Mobile Barriers, demonstrated the equipment Wednesday morning.

"It's like a utility truck and a barrier combined," Groeneweg said. The tractor is a typical unit, followed by about 80 feet of trailer with a 20-foot or 40-foot section scalloped out to provide an area for workers to do their job in one lane of a highway or interstate. The trailer is composed of 20-foot sections. The front and back are somewhat identical, and can take either the fifth wheel or a trailing set of steerable wheels that can be switched around so that the front is in the rear and vice-versa.

District Maintenance Engineer Jesse Skinner could see where the Mobile Barrier could be an effective addition to MoDOT's safety equipment.

"We're always committed to newer and safer ways to protect our workers and the public," Skinner said. "It's not

going to be a universal tool.” In work areas that exceed the Mobile Barrier’s length, we’ll apply more conventional protection. But in some areas where we work, you don’t have that easy avenue of escape, and this is a good tool.”

The TMA detaches so that the rear wheel assembly can be rolled out from beneath the last segment of the trailer and switched around to the front to provide protection on the opposite side. That way, if a crew is working in the number one lane with the mobile barrier’s side facing the number two lane on the right side, when the workers need to do work in the number three lane with the left side protected, the trailer assembly can be reversed so that the barrier is on the other side.

It’s also modular, so if it gets hit, only the section that is damaged needs to be replaced. It can be set up to provide a protective wall in lengths of 42, 62, 82 and 102 feet. Inside the front and back segments is storage for tools, plus 20-foot-long platforms at each end, which can carry barriers. Lighting also is stored inside the end segments and can two light towers can be deployed to provide lighting that exceeds a typical four-light tower.



Mobile Barriers trainer Walt Black (orange helmet) shows MoDOT maintenance workers how to detach the truck-mounted attenuator from the back of the Mobile Barrier. Photo by Steve Porter

The barrier is strong, with beams that match up with car and pickup bumpers on the lower beams, and semi-tractor bumpers and frames on the middle beams.

MoDOT’s State Maintenance Engineer Beth Wright and Assistant Chief Engineer Don Hillis came to the Kansas City District on Thursday to observe the Mobile Barrier in action on I-435 and 87th Street.

The Mobile Barrier has been in use since 2008 in several states, including Colorado, Texas and Oregon. In Texas, a drunk driver fleeing police ran barriers and blockades until the Mobile Barrier stopped him, while protecting a half-dozen highway workers. In Oregon, the Mobile Barrier protected a two-foot-deep hole in a highway and was struck twice by semi-trucks.



Mobile barrier tested in the field on northbound I-435 at 87th Street bridge Thursday morning, August 16. Photo by Steve Porter

Event Kicks Off Enforcement Drive to Catch Impaired Drivers

by Steve Porter

Last year in Missouri 216 people were killed and 865 seriously injured in crashes that involved at least one impaired driver. Those losses didn’t just happen by “accident,” but because someone under the influence willfully ignored the law.

MoDOT, the Missouri State Highway Patrol and law enforcement partners throughout the state are hammering home the message, “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” beginning with stepped up enforcement efforts in the next few weeks aimed at getting impaired drivers off the road. The “Drive Sober” campaign kicks off at 10 a.m. August 17 with a news conference at the Kansas City Regional Police Academy, 6885 NE Pleasant Valley Road, Kansas City, Mo. MoDOT, joined by the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Kansas City Police Department, the Smithville Police Department and a representative from Mothers Against Drunk Driving, will speak about the affect impaired driving has on the victims, their families and friends that lasts a lifetime.

Annette Murray will speak about the deaths July 4, 2011, of her sister Diane Bronson and niece Anna Bronson caused by a drunk driver going the wrong way on I-435. The Kansas City Police Department will display their Mobile DUI Enforcement Center, which speeds up evaluation and testing of suspected drunk drivers. Law enforcement officers from more than 240 agencies throughout the state will be manning checkpoints through September 3, stepping up patrols and looking for drivers who might be impaired. Among those patrols will be Smithville’s new DWI vehicle, provided by MoDOT’s Highway Safety Office for Smithville Police Department’s participation in five DWI campaigns last year.



Annette Murray, sister of Diane and aunt of 10-year-old Anna Bronson, talks about the morning more than a year ago when she learned that her sister and niece were killed by a drunk driver while they were on their way to join Murray for breakfast. Photo by Steve Porter



MoDOT Incident Management Coordinator Rusty James speaks about the toll impaired driving takes on families of victims, while flanked by Diane and Anna Bronson's, who were killed the morning of July 4, 2011 by a drunk driver going the wrong way on I-435 near 63rd Street. Photo by Steve Porter

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Inspecting Work Zones Is a Team Effort

Twenty teams of Central District employees have been busy traveling the Central District inspecting work zones. This is a new practice the district has put into place to help improve work zone safety.

Each work zone inspection team consists of three district employees from a broad range of divisions, backgrounds and experience with work zones. Each team is expected to inspect work zones as a group one day per month from August through October.

Teams can choose any work zones to inspect each time they go out. There's no set quota for the number of inspections, but the teams are asked to plan a route for the day and inspect as many work zones as they can. If a team member is responsible for a specific area within the district, the group must inspect work zones outside of that area.

A new district tracker measure will track the number of teams performing inspections each month, as well as the total number of inspections each month.



Maintenance Superintendent Kent Bohon and Senior Highway Designer Geoff Franks work together to fill out a work zone inspection form for a resurfacing project on Route 89 in Osage County. They are members of one of the Central District's 20 work zone inspection teams that will be inspecting work zones once a month through October to help ensure work zone safety.

Congratulations to Safety Jackpot Winner Keith Zey!



Boonville Crew Leader Keith Zey, at left in photo at left, was the first MoDOT employee to win a chance at the big grab bag drawing that is part of the new Safety Jackpot safety incentive program. Keith drew bags totaling \$750 as a reward for being safe on the job. In the photo at right, Director of Risk and Benefits Jeff Padgett congratulates Keith following a surprise ceremony at the Boonville maintenance facility on Aug. 14. More information on Keith's win can be found on the front page of this issue of Connections.

Chippin' Away at Better Rural Roads



Central District maintenance crews continue to make good progress chip sealing minor routes. Crews have chip sealed 182 miles to date and are currently working on roads in Boone County. In the photo at left, a chip seal team works on Route C in Miller County.

Sign Welcomes Lake Visitors

Area Engineer's Son Working to Erect Flag Pole at Site

MoDOT's Central District worked with the Lake Area Chamber of Commerce to make a Hollywood-style "Lake of the Ozarks" sign a reality. Officials, including Area Engineer Bob Lynch, dedicated the landmark in time for the Fourth of July holiday. What's even neater is that Bob's son, Garrett, is working to erect a flagpole on the site as part of his Eagle Scout project. Click [here](#) to read a Lake Sun News article highlighting Garrett's efforts.



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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at:
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St. Louis District

Bellfontaine Maintenance Building Win District's Challenge of Picking Up Most Trash

by Kara Price



Maintenance crews from the Bellfontaine building were honored on August 23 at an awards luncheon for picking up the most trash bags during the 2012 No MORE Trash! Bash.

St. Louis District's maintenance crews at the Bellfontaine building in north St. Louis County picked up the most trash bags during April's No MORE Trash! Bash. As a reward for the winning maintenance building, St. Louis leadership honored the Bellfontaine crews by providing an awards luncheon for their high results. As promised, Tom Blair, assistant district engineer for St. Louis, spent the day working in the field with the Bellfontaine crews mowing grass along our highways.

St. Louis' General Services department was also recognized at this luncheon for picking up the most trash bags among non-maintenance work groups. All of these great results represent MoDOT's value of teamwork. Congratulations Bellfontaine maintenance crews and General Services in St. Louis!

MoDOT Partners with St. Louis Community to Increase Commercial Drivers License Experts



Marc Jackson, St. Louis maintenance worker (pictured left), practices a pre-trip inspection with Darnel DeBoise, a student earning his commercial drivers license (pictured right), at St. Louis' Westlake training site.

Public Hearing Held for Environmental Assessment of MoDOT's Work in City Arch River 2015

by Andrew Gates

The Missouri Department of Transportation will hold an open-house style public hearing on Wednesday, August 29 to allow the public to share potential environmental impacts that may result from MoDOT's portion of the CityArchRiver 2015 project. The public hearing is scheduled August 29, 2012, between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. at 1520 Market Street in St. Louis. During the meeting, MoDOT engineers will be on hand to discuss the potential environmental impacts for MoDOT's portion of the CityArchRiver 2015 project, the Park over the highway. In addition, engineers will be available to discuss how traffic will move around the city and what improvements are currently planned as part of the project.

This meeting will allow the public to provide input and comments, either directly to the engineers or in written comments, on the possible impacts and presented information. This hearing is part of the Federal process for the planning and evaluation of major construction projects. To view the draft environmental documentation, [click here](#).

For more info

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BUILDING SPRINGFIELD'S NEWEST DDI: Checking plans on the Chestnut Expressway/Route 65 Diverging Diamond Interchange project are Springfield Resident Engineer Brad Gripka, left, and Springfield Senior Construction Inspector Craig Huckaby.



EXPLAINING JOPLIN'S DDI PROJECT: Neosho Senior Construction Inspector Marvin Morris visits with employees at a convenience store to go over traffic pattern changes and other details of the Range Line Road/I-44 Diverging Diamond Interchange project in Joplin. The store was one of many businesses he visited along Range Line Road shortly before construction began Aug. 13. (Photos by Bob Edwards)

Progress at Chestnut Exp./65 Rebuild

Blasting video

A significant phase was reached last week in the reconstruction of the Chestnut Expressway/Route 65 interchange on Springfield's far east side.

On Monday, Aug. 13, a short section of Chestnut Expressway just east of the interchange, was closed -- to be reopened by Sept. 13.

The closing is needed to enable contractor crews to install a 66-inch diameter casing for a future water line underneath Chestnut Expressway and to widen the road to three lanes.

Explosives were used the afternoon of Aug. 15 to cut a trench into rock underneath Chestnut Expressway.

Springfield police officers worked with prime contractor, Hartman Construction of Springfield, to slow traffic on northbound Route 65 and create a gap for when the charges were set off. The interchange ramps were closed for several minutes.

Debris was cleared and work began quickly to excavate and then place the casing.



Chip-Seal Operations Nearing Completion

The Maintenance chip-seal program is approaching the checkered flag for this year, finishing up routes in the west and north-central parts of the Southwest District.

Maintenance forces will have chip-sealed 145 miles of road this summer.

The quality of the product is good, said District Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton.

"Our guys have been safe," he said, and work zones have been set up well.

A contractor, Hutchens Construction of Cassville, completed 200 miles of chip-seals in the far north part of the district a few weeks ago.



PRESERVING ROADS: Maintenance crews chip-seal Route 97 north of Lockwood. (Photo by Johnny Mathews)

"They turned out really nice. I think MoDOT received a very good product," Clinton Senior Construction Inspector Aydi Girgin said. Maintenance did a good job of prepping the roads, he said.

The district's chip-seal total for 2012 was 345 miles. In 2011, 350 miles were chip-sealed, all by Maintenance forces.

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Southeast District

DDI in Farmington Nears Completion Route 221 to Close for Interchange Conversion

The diverging diamond interchange (DDI) in Farmington will be ready for its first Southeast Missouri travelers this September.

To prepare the area for the interchange conversion, MoDOT's contractor will close Route 221 at the Route 67 overpass. The closure is expected to begin at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 4, with Route 221 reopening at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 5, weather permitting.

U-turns will be prohibited as work is underway, and motorists are encouraged to use the marked detour routes.

When Route 221 reopens, traffic will utilize the DDI. However, motorists should expect additional impacts to traffic in the area as contractors work to complete the project. Remaining work after traffic is shifted to utilize the DDI will include installing permanent signage, completing interchange lighting, seeding and mulching the right-of-way, and installing permanent pavement markings on Walker Drive and Progress Drive. Completion is anticipated this fall.

For more information, please contact Resident Engineer Jason Williams at (573) 431-4933 or MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (275-6636). To learn more about navigating the DDI or the suggested detour routes, please visit <http://www.modot.org/southeast/projects/counties/st.francois.htm>.



Please watch the simulation of the DDI in Farmington above or visit www.modot.org/southeast to learn more about the suggested detour routes.

SE Safe & Sound Program Wraps Up

Southeast Missouri now has 116 improved bridges thanks to MoDOT's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program.

"With the opening of the Route 142 bridge over Main Ditch in Butler County on Aug. 15, we concluded the Southeast District's portion of the statewide Safe & Sound program," said District Construction and Materials Engineer Andy Meyer.

The program's mission is to improve over 800 of the state's worst bridges in five years. Completion is anticipated by the end of 2012-more than a year ahead of schedule.

Meyer stated that road closures have been one of the keys to the program's success. [read more >](#)



The Route 142 bridge over Main Ditch in Butler County opened to traffic on Aug. 15-concluding the SE District's portion of the Safe & Sound program.

City of Bloomsdale Thanks MoDOT

Dear Mark,

I just wanted to let you know how pleased the City of Bloomsdale is with the employees who respond to repair requests in Ste. Genevieve County. The staff at the Sikeston office is always helpful and workers are dispatched immediately.

My most recent experience was on Tuesday, July 3, 2012. I received a report of Highway 61 buckling in the city limits at 3:40 p.m. It was apparently quite severe and I called the Sikeston office. I realized it was the end of the working day on the day before a major holiday and did not expect a miracle. One happened, though, because the repair was completed within hours of my report. I have no doubt an accident was prevented.

I wanted to thank you and the MoDOT employees for your excellent service. Please convey our gratitude from the City of Bloomsdale.

Sincerely,
Lynnette Randoll
City Clerk
City of Bloomsdale

For more info

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